



News Release

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New 10-Year Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan Launched

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) is launching a plan focused on ways to make it easier for Utahns to eat healthy and be active. “The purpose of the Plan is to create a statewide movement where community members, as well as public and private organizations, work together to make healthy choices affordable and accessible to all Utahns,” said Lynda Blades, Manager of the UDOH Physical Activity, Nutrition & Obesity Program (PANO).

The goals and strategies were created by a diverse group of partners and focus on the following settings: health care, school, worksite, and community. Workgroups were formed and they selected strategies to help address six target areas set as priorities by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“The workgroups meet year-round to put the strategies to work,” said Blades. “By involving state and local partners with varied expertise and perspectives, we have created a sustainable plan that will be used as a framework over the next decade to guide obesity prevention efforts in Utah.”

The PANO State Plan’s target areas include:

- increase physical activity;
- increase consumption of fruits and vegetables;
- decrease consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages;
- increase breastfeeding initiation, exclusivity and duration;
- decrease consumption of high-energy-dense foods;
- decrease television viewing.

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Pg. 2 of 2 - New 10-Year Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan Launched

As a practical example, to decrease television viewing, the plan includes a strategy to support licensed childcare facilities in adopting new policies. Those policies would set limits on the amount of time children spend watching television or playing video games during the day.

In the health care setting, one strategy is to determine the number of physicians who document height/weight in patient charts, as well as documenting the numbers of children who are overweight or obese who get treatment for the problem.

Obesity is a public health priority because of its associated risk with many other chronic illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes.

To access a copy of the PANO State Plan and/or to get involved in these public health efforts visit: www.health.utah.gov/obesity.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.